

# Oxford Democrat.

No. 2, Vol. 6, New Series.

Paris, Maine, Tuesday, May 19, 1846.

Old Series, No. 11, Vol. 15.

## OXFORD DEMOCRAT.

PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY, BY

G. W. SKILLIN,

### EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

TERMS:—One Dollar and Fifty Cents in advance. ADVERTISEMENTS inserted on reasonable terms;—the Proprietor not being accountable for any error beyond the amount charged for the advertisement. A reasonable deduction will be made for cash in advance.

### Book and Job Printing

EXECUTED WITH NEATNESS AND DESPATCH.

### POETRY.

#### From the Democratic Review.

#### SPURN NOT THE GUILTY.

BY CAROLINE M. SAWYER.

Scorn not the man whose spirit feels  
The curse of guilt upon it rest;  
Upon whose brain the hideous seals  
Of crime and infamy are prest!  
Spurn not the lost one—nor in speech  
More cold and withering than despair,  
Of stern, relentless vengeance preach—  
For he thy lessons will not bear!

'Twill rouse a demon in his heart  
Which thou too late wouldst strive to chain,  
And bid a thousand furies start  
To life, which ne'er may sleep again.  
No! better from her forest lair,  
The furnished lioness to goad,  
Than, in his guilt, remorse, despair,  
With fearful threats the sinner load!

But if a soul thou wouldst redeem,  
And lead a lost one back to God—  
Wouldst thou a guardian angel seem  
To one who long in guilt hath trod?  
Go kindly to him—take his hand,  
With gentle words, within thine own,  
And by his side, a brother stand,  
Till thou the demon sin, dost loose.

He is a man, and he will yield,  
Like snows beneath the torrid ray,  
And his strong heart, though fiercely steel'd  
Before the breath of love give way;  
He had a mother once, and felt  
A mother's kiss upon his cheek,  
And at her knee at evening knelt,  
The prayer of innocence to speak!

A mother—ay! and who shall say,  
Thou'lt deem, dearest, he now may be,  
That spirit may not wake to-day,  
Which filled him at his mother's knee?  
No guilt so utter o'er became  
But find it we some good might find,  
And virtue through the deepest shame,  
Still feebly lights the darkest mind.

Seem not the guilty, then, but plead  
With him in kindest, gentlest mood,  
And back the lost one thou mayst lead  
To God, humanity and good!  
Thou art thyself but man, and thou  
Art weak, perchance, to fall as he;  
Then mercy to the fallen show,  
That mercy may be shown to thee!

### ORIGINAL TALES.

WRITTEN FOR THE DEMOCRAT.

#### The Farmer's Daughter.

What though the world at her may scoff,  
And envy frown severe;  
She needs it not—what careth she,  
For the malicious sneer?  
There is a hidden world within,  
Her own internal worth,  
And what care she, the coldly pass  
The titled sons of earth?

'Miss Beaumont, can you tell me, who that beautiful girl is, now in conversation with Mrs. Green?' asked Roland Lesley, as he was evening seated in the drawing-room of Mrs. R., where a large company had assembled.

'Beautiful!' repeated the lady, 'pray, Mr. Lesley, do you call Emily Stanhope beautiful?'

'Assuredly, I do,' returned Lesley. 'But who is Emily Stanhope, if I may be allowed to ask?'

'Really, you seem to take an unusual interest in the girl,' rejoined Miss Beaumont, 'sarcasically. I presume it will be increased, when I inform you she is the daughter of a poor farmer, who earns his living by the plough and spade.'

'My curiosity, Miss Beaumont, is not diminished, I acknowledge, by your information,' said the gentleman, a little hurt by her pointed remark. 'Miss Stanhope is certainly not to be blamed for her parentage.'

'Oh, no! but I have no patience with such creatures, who force themselves into society, only to pester folks by their vulgar country manners.'

'From the casual glance I have had of Miss Stanhope, I should judge she was far more refined than many who have been in a city,' rejoined Lesley, quietly. 'Her deportment is exceedingly modest, and her manner divested of everything like forwardness or impertinence.'

'Miss Beaumont bit her lip, and a haughty frown gathered upon her brow. She saw, however, that the young man did, by no means, relish her satire, and the friendship of the rich and admired Roland Lesley was an acquisition too valuable, by far, to be cast off at pleasure.'

'Indeed, Mr. Lesley,' said she, with a smile, and as much sweetness as her inward vexation would allow her to assume, 'your opinion of the young lady differs widely from my own. You assuredly cannot think the demureness of her country look, as evidence of refinement.'

'Pardon me, Miss Beaumont, if I say, I discover nothing like demureness, either in her look or manners. On the contrary, all is simplicity and frankness, mingled with an unaffected modesty, which is to me, the convincing proof of a really refined and uncorrupted mind. Miss Stanhope has not been presented to you, I infer!'

'No, indeed, Mr. Lesley,' haughtily replied the lady, 'vexed that her sophistry had not its desired effect.'

'Perhaps, should you become acquainted with her, the injurious ideas you entertain respecting her character, may be done away. We ought not to condemn, till we are satisfied our accusations are just.'

'I must beg to be excused from permitting an introduction,' answered Miss Beaumont, 'dipnantly. If would be highly disagreeable to myself, and till satisfied my impressions are unjust, I cannot consent to such a measure. Excuse me, Mr. Lesley, I have all due deference to your opinion—but I wonder greatly at Mrs. Green's consenting to an introduction, and think it highly deleterious to the dignity of her station. Indeed, she often violates the established etiquette of gentility and good taste by associating with persons infinitely beneath her.'

'True gentility is kindness and good feeling towards all,' replied Lesley, placing a marked emphasis on his words. 'I must, however, add he, rising and bowing formally, 'in the imputation of a disregard to its rules, for I am determined on an introduction to Miss Stanhope.'

Miss Beaumont's brow grew dark, and she looked towards the object of their discussion, as though she would have annihilated her, had it been in her power. Roland passed on, without noticing it, to the lady of the mansion, and in a whisper, communicated his request. 'The lady rose, and he was immediately presented to Miss Stanhope.'

'The person of Emily was tall and fully developed, displaying an admirable symmetry of proportion, blended with a fullness of outlines, which, without marring its dignity in the least, conveyed the impression of perfect health, united with vigor and vivacity of motion. A connoisseur on female beauty would probably have censured the irregularity of her features, for her loveliness consisted more in the expression and vivid coloring of her countenance, than in mere symmetry.'

Her complexion was clear, transparent and beautifully tinted, the rose blossoming on her cheek, not in the faint and delicate tints, by which that of the languid beauty is characterized, but in its purest, richest and most lively colorings. Her forehead was highly intellectual, and her eyes cerulean color, large, lustrous and expressive of a mind in which were combined deep and fervent susceptibilities, with a degree of resolution, unusual to the gentleness of the sex. The principal charm of her countenance was its bright and animated expression—a frank, open, cheerful look depicted on every feature, as well as in the intelligent and sparkling eye.

She received Lesley's compliments with grace and self-possession, though the carmine tint of modesty overspread her face, as she caught his glance of admiration. Roland sat down beside her, and making some commonplace observations, endeavored to commence a conversation with her. In this attempt he was successful, and he was surprised at the elegant simplicity of her remarks, and the ease and fluency with which she spoke. There was a slight touch of quaintness in her manner at times; but if this was a defect, it was more than compensated by her ready ingenueness, and entire absence of everything like flattery or affectation.

'This movement on the part of Lesley occasioned not a little surprise among the aristocratic bells of the village who were then assembled, and numerous were the frowns and satirical speeches directed to the fair object of his attention. Roland saw this, and though he could scarcely forbear smiling when he reflected on the secret cause of their animadversions, he was vexed at their unpardonable insolence. Emily also noticed it, and though keenly susceptible to every species of impertinence, she was too conscious of the intrinsic superiority of her own mind to allow her composure to be disturbed. From the first moment of her entrance, she had observed unequivocal demonstrations of contempt, and she had been mortified by the peremptory refusal of several to an introduction. She had also overheard many remarks respecting her parentage, and sundry sneering expressions, touching her supposed ignorance and vulgarity. She was surprised and gratified with the attentions of Lesley, and thought him, by far the handsomest person in the room.'

While they were conversing together, on different subjects, Miss Beaumont hanging on the arm of a friend chanced to pass by. She paused and stared contemptuously in the face of Emily. 'The color deepened on the young girl's cheek, but she met the gaze of Miss Beaumont with a calm, steady look which seemed to rebuke her impertinent scrutiny. Abashed, by her tranquil manner, Miss Beaumont turned away, and hurried on.'

'That is Miss Beaumont, the belle of our village,' returned a lady who sat a short distance from Emily, and who, by the way, was known throughout the whole village for her loquacity and desire of giving information. 'Don't you think she is beautiful?'

'Her personal beauty, madame, is certainly very striking,' rejoined Emily with coolness. 'And but a slender disguise to the most disgusting deformities of mind,' thought Roland. He had closely observed her manner towards Emily, and he was increased as well as mortified at her impertinence. He had known, from his first acquaintance with her, that her notions were aristocratic in the extreme; but he had never imagined her capable of such unblushing impudence, and the discovery was painful and mortifying, beyond expression.

'She is excessively proud,' resumed the loquacious lady, and I assure you, she seldom deigns to notice any one whom she imagines inferior to herself. I like to see one have a proper

regard for their own standing in society, but I protest, such aristocracy is perfectly ridiculous. 'I have heard it remarked,' observed Emily, 'that the people of this village were in general very aristocratic in their notions.'

'I regret to say the remark is a veritable one,' said Lesley. 'Otherwise liberal in their views, this is the prevailing sin among the community. I cannot imagine from whence these mistaken principles originally proceeded; but there are but few who have not imbibed them to a great extent.'

'Ah, Mr. Lesley,' exclaimed the lady, 'I perceive you still retain your old notions.'

'It is my pride to retain them, Mrs. Brooks. When I have so far forgotten what is due to the principles of right as to suppose the poor but honest laboring man is not entitled to as much respect, as him whom fortune has elevated to a sphere of idleness, then indeed, shall I consider myself unworthy the friendship of those, by whom such principles are now advocated.'

'I perfectly agree with you, Mr. Lesley,' rejoined the lady. 'But don't you think there is a difference in regard to respectability, in the different occupations of the laboring men?'

'Assuredly, I do. The occupation of a mechanic, I should judge a little more respectable than that of a hang-man.'

Mrs. Brooks was somewhat disconcerted with this unexpected rejoinder; but having commenced the subject with a purpose—for she was a woman who never acted without a motive,—she was unwilling to drop it so suddenly.

'Well, for instance, do you not think the occupation of a merchant more honorable than a farmer's?'

Roland immediately perceived her drift. He was well acquainted with her character, and knew that with her penchant for talkativeness, she united the less pardonable propensities for wounding the feelings of others, without respect for their age or station. She had condemned the aristocratic notions of Miss Beaumont from the idea of its being unpleasant to Lesley; but finding he so readily assimilated to her opinions, she determined to make an attack on the feelings of Emily, by indirectly alluding to her parentage, which, in the presence of the gentlemen, supposed would occasion her extreme mortification. Roland saw her intention, and he stole a furtive look at Emily, to whom all eyes were directed by the inquiry of Mrs. Brooks. The color had deepened on the cheek of the young girl, but not a muscle of her face moved, and her manner was perfectly free from embarrassment.

'I think, madam,' said he, sternly, 'I should prefer the occupation of the latter, from the circumstance that the former has often been disgraced by the most consummate baseness, and utter violation of every principle of honesty. Miss Stanhope, I presume, does not regret that her father chose such a vocation in life. On the contrary, she has reason—abundant reason, to rejoice at the circumstance, for many of our most eminent men were originally tillers of the soil.'

'Totally disconcerted with this severe retort, Mrs. Brooks, with all her volubility, had no power to frame a reply. She endeavored, however, to conceal her chagrin by commencing a conversation with a lady who sat opposite to herself. Emily involuntarily glanced towards Lesley, and admiration and gratitude beamed forth from her speaking eyes. She longed to declare her thanks for his generosity in her behalf; but as no opportunity was afforded her, she could only express them by the silent, but effective language of the eye.'

Miss Beaumont had been a close observer of the previous scene, and it is not necessary to state how many were the withering glances directed to the unconscious Emily, or how often the pouting lip was unmercifully bitten in her attempts to suppress her vexation. Somehow, her good humor and conviviality, of which, by the way, she had never possessed a remarkable share, seemed to have forsaken her, and it was apparently a difficult task for her to speak with any degree of composure. At length, Lesley arose from his seat, and politely apologizing to Emily, left her side, not, however, without first securing for her, the companionship of a lady whose conversation he knew would be both agreeable and edifying. A sudden ray of sunshine over a dark cloud might well have typified the change in Miss Beaumont's countenance, as she marked this action. But the salutary ray was of short duration, for instead of approaching her, as she had expected, he passed on to the other side of the apartment, and deliberately seated himself among a group of ladies and gentlemen, without even casting a look towards her. Poor Miss Beaumont! her dreams that night were strangely frightful, and her waking visions were scarcely less agreeable.

'The father of Lesley was the wealthiest gentleman in the community, and as Roland was his only son and would in consequence, be the sole inheritor of his fortune on his decease, it was no remarkable circumstance that the young man should be a particular favorite of the belles. And, indeed, if this glittering appendage had been wanting, it is doubtful whether he would not still have exercised a potent sway over their hearts, for no one would gainsay that he was every way calculated to elicit admiration. He was a tall, finely-proportioned fellow, uniting both grace and dignity in his deportment, with a winning exterior, and features, that, for their extreme regularity and vividness of expression, might not have disgraced an Adonis. Possessing every advantage for education, he had not neglected to improve a mind, which was, indeed, a counterpart to the form that enshrined it. Few could boast of being his equal in any branch of

knowledge, whether scientific or practical, and still less, his superior. Though, from the wealth of his father, he was abundantly able to support a life of idleness, the native energy and rectitude of his character would not allow him thus to support a life of idleness, the native energy and rectitude of his character would not allow him thus to squander the best moments of his existence. He had chosen the profession of law, and at the commencement of our story, had nearly completed the requisite studies.

'The village in which he resided was noted for the aristocratic principles, prevalent among its inhabitants. Notwithstanding his father was among the foremost who advocated these principles, Roland had utterly repudiated them, as absurd, if not ridiculous, in the extreme. He knew that true nobility was not confined to rank—on the contrary, that it was oftener found in the more humble and retired walks of life.

Among those who had been most favored with his attentions was Miss Adela Beaumont, the reigning belle of the village. It may be safely inferred that this distinction did not lessen the lady's self-importance, of which she had always possessed a considerable share. Miss Beaumont was really beautiful; but her person was destitute of the ineffable charms of modesty and goodness which imperceptibly win the heart, even though their possessor lacks the more seductive graces of womanly elegance and comeliness. Pride was the ruling motive of her heart, and there was no pleasure in life, valuable in her eyes, unless it administered to this propensity. She had received a finished education, and excelled in the various accomplishments which are so essential to those who possess an elevated standing in society. Lesley admired her for her extreme beauty and her accomplishments, and even ascribed to her, graces of mind, of which she was, in truth, utterly destitute. In his presence, she effected a deep sensibility, and a profound disgust for the petty vices and degeneracies of human nature, and so well did she carry out her farce, that Roland imagined her, with the exception of her aristocratic principles, a most faultless being.

Rumor already had it that, ere a year should pass away, the elegant mansion of Mr. Lesley would receive a new mistress in the person of Miss Beaumont. This, however, was not true, but how soon such a supposition might prove correct, would have been difficult to tell, had not an incident occurred which materially changed the tenor of Lesley's feelings. The incident to which we allude was none other than the arrival of Emily Stanhope. She was the daughter of a respectable farmer, living about five miles from the village, who, though not wealthy, possessed sufficient for the comforts and conveniences of life. Having a friend in the village, she had come thither, with the intention of spending a few weeks. The conduct of Miss Beaumont towards her, on the evening of which we have already spoken, disclosed her true character to Lesley, and he was as much surprised as mortified at the discovery. After that, he avoided her society as much as possible, and his attentions to her were only such as politeness absolutely demanded. Miss Beaumont's indomitable pride prevented her from appearing to regret the change in his manner; but her unusual haughtiness and petulance plainly discovered to the sagacious observer, that she keenly felt his neglect.

During Emily's stay in the village, Lesley frequently visited her, and soon learned to appreciate the intrinsic worth of her character. It is true she did not possess all those accomplishments which so many deem indispensable to a lady; but she had what was far more, an uncorrupted mind and a warm, frank and benevolent heart. She could not jabber French, nor play on the harp or piano, though she could sing very sweetly; but she had read extensively, and was well versed in the various departments of artificial elegance, either in her manner or attire; but she had that innate delicacy of feeling, and that elevation of soul above the sensualism of the world, which constitute true refinement. Lesley esteemed her for the rectitude and purity of her principles, and soon felt a warm interest in her welfare. His friendship was gratefully reciprocated, and it was not long ere a mutual confidence subsisted between them. The idea of love did not enter the mind of Emily; but we will not touch that the gentleman had never entertained such a thought.

'The time appointed for Emily's departure speedily arrived, and though Lesley endeavored to dissuade her from returning so soon, she did not change her purpose. He requested permission to visit her, which was unhesitatingly given, and saw her depart with feelings of regret he had never experienced before. Poor Miss Beaumont! she fancied after Emily's departure, he would return to herself; but her expectations were woefully disappointed. He preserved his stoicism, and resisted all her allurements to recall him to her side, with a coolness that certainly did not have quite so refrigerating an effect on the feelings of the lady. The attentions of Lesley to Miss Stanhope had excited universal surprise, and afforded an inexhaustible theme for discussion among the good dames of the village. Miss Beaumont affected to disbelieve these rumors, and was very assiduous in her endeavors to correct them. But gossip will have its own way, and if you attempt to check it, like the swine species, it will invariably turn upon yourself.

Roland availed himself of Emily's permission, and his expectations of pleasure by so doing were not disappointed. Mr. Stanhope, Emily's father, was a hale, jovial and benevolent hearted old man, perfectly content with his lot, and regarded the luxuries of wealth with an indifference

which, to a mercenary mind, would have appeared unaccountable. He received Roland with the greatest cordiality, and conversed with him, respecting the aspect of the season and the prospects for different crops, with as much volubility as though he had known him from childhood. Emily was his idol and he was never weary of dwelling on her beauty, her activity, and kindness to himself. This was a subject of much interest to Roland, and it was in consequence a frequent theme of conversation. It must not, however, be inferred from this, that he took less pleasure in the society of Emily. He addressed to watch her quietly assisting her mother in her daily round of domestic duties; and never seeming to weary in administering to the comfort of others. In short, she was a sort of 'presiding divinity' over her father's household, dispensing happiness to all, and dissipating by her smiles and unalterable good humor, whatever perplexity or sorrow intruded itself upon its peaceful precincts. Lesley, however, very carefully concealed his sentiments, for he was not quite so sure they were reciprocated, as he could wish; and he fancied it better to remain in suspense, if suspense it could be called, than to know the worst, and be thus banished from her society.

While Lesley was thus enjoying himself, there was a storm gathering over his head, of which he little dreamed. About the time of which we speak, a sudden and insatiable thirst for speculation prevailed among the people of the village. Many plunged recklessly into the dangerous tide without even reflecting on the probable results of their temerity. A great number were ruined, in consequence, and among these was Mr. Lesley, the father of Roland. The latter had frequently warned him against pursuing so dangerous a business; but blinded by a love of gain and the prospect of vast riches, he lent no heed to his entreaties. Too late did he awaken from his golden dreams to find himself stripped of his possessions, and he and his son scarcely less than beggars. To add to his misfortunes, his former intimate friends—if such they could be called—deserted him at once, and there was not one in the large circle of his acquaintances who would even deign to offer him assistance in his distress. This, perhaps, was not to be wondered at, for in prosperity, unlike his son, he was proud, selfish and unfeeling; and his misfortunes, instead of exciting compassion, were only pronounced a just punishment for his former uncharitableness.

Though this blow was severe to Roland, he had too much energy and strength of mind to allow himself to be overwhelmed by it. Fortunately, he had completed the study of law, and could now hope to earn a livelihood by his profession. As his native village afforded few advantages to a young, inexperienced hand like himself, he resolved to quit it at once, and locate himself in some place where he would be more likely to obtain practice. Besides, he was unwilling to remain longer where he met only insult and impertinence, without one word of sympathy for the misfortunes into which his father's inconsiderate folly had precipitated him. Miss Beaumont, of course, no longer endeavored to win back his favor, and Lesley could not forbear smiling as he marked the sudden change perceptible in her manners.

He could not think of departing, without a visit to Emily, who, he felt confident, would not regard him less kindly for the mere loss of the paltry baubles of wealth. He renounced all ideas of suing for her hand, for he could not hope, even were she prepossessed in his favor, that she would consent to wed him in his present reduced circumstances. It was not without many struggles that he arrived at this determination; but he felt that prudence, though a stern dictator, should never be sacrificed to gratify pleasure.

It was near the close of a warm day in summer, when Lesley turned his horse down the shaded avenue that led to the residence of Farmer Stanhope. He dismounted at the end of it, and was about opening the front door, when he observed Emily, leaning in a pensive attitude against the garden-gate. Her back was towards him, and it was evident, from her appearance, she was unaware of his arrival. Lesley approached her hastily and pronounced her name. She turned around with involuntary quickness, and a cordial smile diffused itself over her face, as her eye fell on him. Roland thought she had never appeared more beautiful before, and, perhaps, he was not mistaken, for she certainly did look very lovely in her simple dress, with dark, auburn hair floating in natural curls over her neck, and round her glowing cheeks.

'Mr. Lesley!' exclaimed she. 'This is truly an unexpected pleasure!'

'Ah, Emily, you will not declare thus, when you know the occasion of my sudden appearance.' Emily noticed the unusual dejection of his manner, and having previously heard of the reverses he had met with, instantly conjectured the purport of his visit.

'I am not ignorant of your misfortune, Mr. Lesley. I sincerely regret it; but the circumstance has not diminished in the least, the friendship I entertain for you.'

'I did not suppose, Emily, it would occasion any alteration in your sentiments, and I thank you for the assurance. Your friendship is of inestimable value to me. All those who once professed an interest in my welfare have forsaken me with prosperity, and you may imagine how grateful I feel for this evidence of your unabated regard.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed Emily with surprise, for unversed as she was in the ways of the world, she did not know to what lengths of business the human heart was capable of going. 'But I pre-

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